

Those Mightily Used of God, Part 2 - Acts 19:24-31 - April 5th, 2009

- This is part two of a series titled; "Those Mightily Used of God," and obviously the Apostle Paul would certainly be one of those men.
- When you do a character study of hero's of the faith, like Paul, you can uncover certain common characteristics present in all of them.
- Here, Paul, while on his third missionary, is going to sort of rise from the pages and reveal to us what some of these characteristics are.

1. They're in tune with the will of God (Verse 21)

- Paul knew that it was both God's will and God's way that he go to Jerusalem, by way of Achaia and Macedonia on his way to Rome.

2. They're open to the help of others (Verse 22)

- The Apostle Paul both relied on and would ask for the help of others. Here Timothy and Erastus were an enormous help to Paul.
- We're told that Paul sent them on ahead to Macedonia, because they had been a help to him and had greatly ministered to him as well.

3. They're not disturbed by disturbances (Verse 23)

- Here were told that it was about this time that there arose a great disturbance about the "Way," which as we'll see escalates into a riot.
- Everywhere Paul went a disturbance would soon follow. Paul not only disturbed, he wasn't disturbed by the disturbances he disturbed.

4. They're not about making money (Verses 24-25)

24 A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. 25 He called them together, along with the workmen in related trades, and said: "Men, you know we receive a good income from this business.

v24 We're introduced to a financially successful business man named Demetrius who, as a silversmith made silver shrines of Artemis.

v25 Demetrius calls together a group of businessmen and tells them how Paul is really bad for business and will affect their income.

5. They're willing to expose false religions (Verses 26-27)

26 And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all. 27 There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited, and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty."

v26 Demetrius then tells these businessmen that Paul has convinced large numbers of people that "man-made gods are no gods at all."

v27 He tells them that not only is Paul affecting their income, but also the good name of their trade, and the majesty of their goddess.

- Notice how they accuse Paul of "discrediting the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world."

- This was the religion of the day, if you please, and they would worship this goddess Artemis, or Diana, as she was called.

- The temple of Diana in Ephesus was one of the "7" wonders of the ancient world, and the temple itself was a banking center as well.

- In other words, Paul was shaking the very foundation of their lives both spiritually and financially. By speaking truth, he exposed the lie.

6. They're unflinching in their fearlessness (Verses 28-31)

28 When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" 29 Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater. 30 Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. 31 Even some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theater.

v28-29 They become furious, begin shouting and a riot breaks out. Then seizing Paul's traveling companions they rush into the theatre.

v30-31 Paul, with an unflinching fearlessness, wants to go with them but the disciples won't let him. Even the officials beg him not to go.

- Where others saw danger from the men, Paul saw opportunity for the Lord. God can't use us unless we have unflinching fearlessness.

"Had it not been for these entreaties the heroic apostle would have faced the crowd."

Charles Spurgeon

"The Church at this moment needs men, the right kind of men, bold men.... We languish for men who feel themselves expendable in the warfare of the soul, who cannot be frightened by threats of death because they have already died to the allurements of this world. Such men will be free from the compulsions that control weaker men. They will not be forced to do things by the squeeze of circumstances; their only compulsion will come from within--or from above. This kind of freedom is necessary if we are to have prophets in our pulpits again instead of mascots. These free men will serve God and mankind from motives too high to be understood by the rank and file of religious retainers who today shuttle in and out of the sanctuary. They will make no decisions out of fear, take no course out of a desire to please, accept no service for financial considerations, perform no religious act out of mere custom; nor will they allow themselves to be influenced by the love of publicity or the desire for reputation."

A.W. Tozer "Of God and Men" pp. 11-13